

The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY
THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

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WHY THUS LONGING?

Why thus longing, thus forever sighing,
For the far-off, the unattained and dim;
While the beautiful, all round thee lying,
Offers up its low, perpetual hymn?

Wouldst thou listen to its gentle teaching,
All thy restless yearnings it would still;
Leaf, and flower, and laden bee, are preach-
ing
Thine own sphere, though humble, first to
fill.

Poor indeed thou must be, if around thee
Thou no ray of light and joy canst throw;
If no silken cord of love hath bound thee
To some little world through weal and
woe;—

If no dear eyes thy fond love can brighten,
No fond voices answer to thy own;
If no brother's sorrow thou canst lighten,
By daily sympathy and gentle tone.

Not by deeds that win the crowd's applause,
Not by worlds that give thee world-renown,
Not by martyrdom or vaunted crosses,
Canst thou win and wear the immortal
crown.

Daily struggling, though unloved and lonely,
Every day a rich reward will give;
Thou wilt find by hearty striving only,
And truly loving, thou canst truly live.

Dost thou revel in the rosy morning,
When all nature hails the lord of light,
And his smile the mountain-tops adorning,
Robes yon fragrant fields in radiance bright?

Other hands may grasp the fields and forest,
Proud proprietors in pomp may shine;
But, with fervent love if thou adorest,
Thou art wealthier,—all the world is thine!

Yet if through earth's wide domains thou
rovest,
Sighing that they are not thine alone,
Not those fair fields, but thyself, thou lovest,
And their beauty and thy worth are gone.

Nature wears the colors of the spirit;
Sweetly to her worshipper she sings;
All the glow, the grace, she doth inherit,
Round her trusting child she fondly flings.

—*Miss Winslow.*

THE SECRET OF HAPPINESS.

When I was younger, I laughed and cried
in equal measure when merry or sad. Now
there is little laughter or weeping; but I
often smile, which tells a tale of "past
twenty-five." In my 'teen days the pride and
pleasure of earning my own living bubbled up
in high spirits like a perpetual fountain, and
the hope of gaining riches was always present
in the background of my thoughts as a vague
inspiration. By and by the daily journey to
the city grew less amusing. Weary faces
passed me in the crowd. Girls who had been
bright and alert now looked soberly pitiful,
and the tripping gait had changed to patient,
tired plodding. The streets, once full of gay
variety, changed to a dull procession of labor-
ing people and noisy traffic, going ever for-
ward under the sharp crack of Taskmaster
Poverty's whip.

Then I began to wonder what was wrong.
Had I changed also? Was I like those girls
who suddenly were anxious women? My

little looking-glass and my heart answered with solemn regret, "Yes." Lines across mouth and brow, sunken spaces around my eyes, life sinking out of skin and hair, echoed the mournful truth, adding, "And in ten years more!" It was terrible. Something must be done. But what?

First, there must be causes for the change. On the instant many tiny voices that had sometimes uttered a cry I had scarcely heard blended themselves into articulate expression. "Women are not meant to fight the world's battle," they said in derisive tones. "Girls have been misled in this generation by women with false appetites craving for publicity and equality. A woman is always equal to a man—in her own sphere of womanhood. Women need homes and love. They have left them for the will-o'-the-wisps of independence and freedom. And by the time they are thirty they are engulfed in the bog of restless dissatisfaction and despair. Oh, that a reaction may come quickly, and the next generation revert to heart, home, and children!"

That may all be true, said I; but what is done cannot be undone. Here am I on the edge of the bog. How to avoid being sucked into sourness and heart-hunger? I observe that there is a crisis in the space which intervenes between the ages of thirty and forty in the lives of single women. Many become outwardly callous, sour, and cynical,—most horrible characteristics in creatures meant to display sympathy, sweetness, and faith. *Must* I become only a tired, disappointed, disillusioned woman?

"No," replied a strong voice, which I recognized as that of my soul. "You are poor, lonely, and obscure; but you may live in beauty and light, serving your day and generation nobly. Not for you are home, husband, and love, yet you may find resting-places and affection everywhere. Lift your thoughts to heaven: the heart of woman was fashioned there, and there alone is it understood. Across the sky you will find written in letters of living gold the motto of the angels and the secret of happiness. It is contained in one word, 'others.' The tide of love, if denied outlet, will suffocate and torment its possessor. Therefore take the whole world to your bosom. Love all, good and bad, old and young. You will soon find your store of affection exhausted, yet constantly renewed from the adorable Source of love, who bids the sun warm just and unjust. Put yourself away. Live to help your neighbor, who is the person happening to be next you at the moment. Resolve that no day shall

pass wherein you have not tried to perform an unselfish and kindly deed. It is an old secret, this, but the only true one."

So I took my soul's advice, and entered on the path of happiness. Never was effort better repaid. The world has become the antechamber of paradise. I began by trying to love secretly the people I met in the street, and particularly those who appeared to me most disagreeable. Presently this exercise resulted in a glow of pleasure within myself, and a true desire that the awkward circumstances which had caused the apparent ill-humor of these individuals might be lessened or transformed. In the early mornings, in the crowded trains, a habit grew of silently wishing each man and woman in the compartment a good and happy day, and of asking the blessing of the Holy upon them.

My small wage became ample for small aids to my fellow-pilgrims in the world. Opportunities for tiny kindnesses of word, look, and deed opened at every step. It was amazing to find multitudes of good hearts, of grateful and understanding eyes, of lips ready to smile, thronging the great English city which often seems as if it existed merely to grasp wealth and worship Mammon. But that is but the surface. Day by day I go my way, seeing many, speaking to some, hearing more; and in all the days I have never discovered a wholly bad man or woman. In every heart there is a sacred chamber, with an altar and the dove of purity and love above it. Sometimes the chamber is very contracted and the altar very poor; but—they are there, and may be expanded into wondrous height and breadth and beauty.

I am a happy woman. As the years go on, the happiness will deepen. No longer are the streets dull and gray, and my brother and sister toilers ill-favored. The more worn they are, the more love they need. If the sun shines, all the gleams fall my way, and I ask that the brightest and warmest may fall on those who need them most. When I cannot give, I ask the One who has all to supply the needy. The hours are crowded with pictures and pleasures. The river that used to be muddy and speak of the madness and misery it covered sings songs under the old stone arches now. At night I go to sleep with the memory of a child's confiding look, an old woman's hand-clasp, a beauty's condescending, amused glance, a beggar's blessing, or some such mighty trifle to make me glad. Winds among the few trees, rain making roofs and gutters bright, sun glinting on the rich man's carriage and the poor man's

barrow, sky and clouds, stones and brown ground, houses and animals,—they all have their messages, and talk to me in sweetness. I am not lonely: nobody has so many friends. I am not poor: my wealth cannot be counted. I am not old: love is ever young. Sickness and the workhouse *may* come in the future. Well, there is a treasure that nothing, not death itself, can touch.—*By a Workwoman.*

THE STILL HOUR.

THE PEACE OF GOD.

Lord! can this weak world sore wound us,
When such balm thy grace doth pour?
Lord! can such war and woe confound us,
When thou givest of thy store,—
When thou offerest
Perfect peace forevermore?

Thou alone thine own grace lendest:
Lord! from thee this peace of thine!
Secretly thy peace thou sendest,
Softly seekest some meek shrine!
Sweetly makest
Some sad, striving soul divine.

Of the raging world they hear not
Whom thy sweet peace singeth to:
Warfare with the world they fear not
Whom thy strong peace doth renew.
Mighty meek ones!
Perfect peace exalteth you.

—*T. H. Gill.*

The business of life is to make the most of one's self for the sake of others. The teacher of young children should help her pupils to grow gradually out of selfishness into helpfulness.

It is for you to find the eternal law of this universe and to put yourself in harmony with that law.—*Edward Everett Hale.*

There is so much bad in the best of us,
And so much good in the worst of us,
That it hardly behoves any of us
To talk about the rest of us.

—*Governor Hoch of Kansas.*

Some murmur when their sky is clear and wholly bright to view,
If one small speck of dark appear in their great heaven of blue;
And some with thankful love are filled if but one streak of light,
One ray of God's good mercy, gild the darkness of the night.

Live each day as though it were your last,
Learn as though you were to live forevermore.

—*John Fiske.*

The future is lighted for us with the radiant colors of hope. Strife and sorrow shall disappear. Peace and love shall reign supreme. The dream of poets, the lesson of priest and prophet, the inspiration of the great musician, is confirmed in the light of modern knowledge; and as we gird ourselves up for the work of life, we may look forward to the time when in the truest sense the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever, king of kings and lord of lords.—*John Fiske.*

In returning and rest shall ye be saved;
in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength.—*Isaiah.*

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

Send all offers and requests for this department to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 25 Fairmount Way, Quincy, Mass.

Please remember, when you see a request for a book in the Book Club, to write a card to Mrs. Nichols, asking "Shall I send such a book to such a person?" before sending it, else the person who requests it may receive several copies. When any one writes directly to you, asking for a book offered by you, send a card to Mrs. Nichols, saying that you have sent it. When you receive more requests than you can meet, send these to the Book Club to be printed here.

OFFERS.

For the following please apply to Miss C. W. Harrington, Lexington, Mass.: "Channing's Thoughts," "Channing's Memoirs," compiled by Henry A. Miles; "Restatement of Christian Doctrine," Henry A. Bellows; "The Altar at Home," by Clergymen in and near Boston; "The Law of Retribution," Orville Dewey; "Discourses on Doctrines of Christianity," William G. Eliot; "Foregleams of Immortality," Edmond H. Sears; "Discourses on Unity of God," William G. Eliot; "Sermons," A. P. Peabody.

REQUESTS.

I. I have been very, very ill, and have not fully recovered my strength yet. I am confined to the house a good deal of the time. The reading and cards I have received have been a great deal of comfort to me. I pass along all the reading I have to help and cheer every one I can with it. I have a stereoscope and a very few views. I should be so glad if some one would send me some more,—old ones, that is, some that have been published a long time; and also views of the Pan-American Exposition. A woman with four

little children, confined at home nearly all the time, would like reading matter. The oldest child is six; the youngest is one year. Her address is: Mrs. Edith Hackett, Clinton, Maine. For reference, apply to Rev. Charles Lowell, Clinton, Maine. Mrs. Nellie Whitten, Clinton, Maine, R. D. 43.

2. I am too poor to buy any books; if any one would care to send me some, I should be very thankful. Religious books are preferred. Address, C. F. Lindberg, 123 Aurora Lock, Ironwood, Michigan.

3. I am a lonely, heart-broken woman. Husband taken away. I have three small children to maintain, the oldest six years, the youngest four months old. Will ask for suitable reading. Should like a Bible, any kind of magazines. Should appreciate some little scraps for patchwork. For reference, L. E. Brubaker, Callaway, Virginia. From a very lonely friend, Mrs. Lucy Jones, Philpott, Virginia.

4. There is no library here, and, consequently, good books are few and far between with me. I shall be very grateful for: "David Copperfield"; "Little Dorrit"; "A Tale of Two Cities"; and an old book of Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe's, "Dred, a Tale of the Dismal Swamp." I do not care how second hand any of these may be, so that the body of the book is intact. I have sent, and am sending, papers, magazines, and post-cards to requests, particularly where there are children in the family. Address, Mrs. Agnes Blanchard, 324 North Magnolia Street, Ocala, Florida.

5. I should appreciate very much some nice reading, such as the *Pictorial Review*, *Youth's Companion*, or any such magazines. For reference, apply to Rev. W. V. Jerman, Patrick, South Carolina, Post-office Box 61. May God's richest blessings abide with you and your good works is my prayer. (Miss) Ethel Horne, Morven, North Carolina, R. 2, Box 82.

6. I come begging for reading. I am a poor woman, in very poor health. My husband is not strong; and we have my little brother, aged ten years, to care for and to raise. His mother and father are both dead. He longs for an education, and needs books; and I shall be so thankful for reading for myself and husband as well as for my little brother. We are in a lonely neighborhood, and have to work hard for a living. I shall be very glad if some of the dear friends will write to me. I need cheer, my health is so

poor. I get discouraged and feel the need of cheering letters. Address, Mrs. Annie McKnight, Bannockburn, South Carolina, Route 1.

7. I am a rural school teacher; and, as we have all grades in one room under one teacher, it is very difficult to keep them all interested. I should be grateful for any books that would interest children or that would assist me in my work, as there is no library furnished. I should also be glad to hear from other rural teachers who would care to offer suggestions. For reference, apply to Rev. Lyons, Ringgold, Ohio. Address, Miss Fay Blackburn, Ringgold, Ohio.

8. I am writing to the *Cheerful Letter* for the first time. I want to receive some good reading matter, also some picture books and story books for my little six-year-old boy. He got burned real badly some time back, and had to stay in bed more than a month. I am also very desirous of a Bible, as our Bible was burned a year ago when our house and everything we had got burned. I hope I shall soon receive some reading and some letters. Address, Mrs. Carrie Mauldin, Ansonville, North Carolina.

9. One of my friends gave me a copy of the *Cheerful Letter*, and I liked it so well that I should be glad if you would send me a copy of it for one year. I would rather read than do anything else, and should be glad of any good magazines and any kind of books you would like to send me. Address, Miss Ruth M. Cutts, Chase City, Virginia, R. F. D. 1.

10. Melton Hancock, Stuart, Virginia, R. D. 5, Box 23, will be fifteen on September 24, and asks that he be remembered with cards or reading.

11. Mrs. Cora Martin, Sandy Ridge, North Carolina, Route 1, Box 56, asks for a song-book, a Bible, and suitable reading for her family. The husband is ill; they live on rented land, and have four children, the oldest, Richard, being six years old, Tom four, Annie M. two, and Peggy five months.

12. Mr. G. C. Adams, Mt. Washington School, Ardmore, Oklahoma, asks for *Scientific American* and the *Étude*.

13. Bibles are very much needed by the committee. Please send or leave at 25 Beacon Street.

14. Those who have contributed to Mrs. Lloyd's work in Gilmanton, New Hampshire,

will be interested to know a bit of what she has accomplished in the past year: Magazines put in circulation, 1,893; private libraries started in homes of thirty-four children; nine school libraries in the nine schools of Gilmanton, containing 1,243 books; also a Sunday-school library and community, with a total number of books put in use 3,788. As Mrs. Lloyd hopes to continue her work in supplying books for the different libraries, and to increase the children's home libraries to one hundred, she will welcome any assistance we may give.

We extend our sympathy to Mrs. Sarah Gilbert, of Fullerton, Nebraska. Mr. Gilbert was killed by a train in the early morning while on his way to work July 20. Many will remember Mrs. Gilbert as one of our early correspondents.

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

HOW TO READ.

I have before me as I write a handful of letters which have been written to the office of *The Young Folks*, asking such questions. And all intelligent young friends are asking each other such questions, and so ask them of me every day. I shall answer these questions by laying down some general rules, just as I have done before, but I shall try to put you into the way of choosing your own books, rather than choosing for you a long, defined list of them.

I believe very thoroughly in courses of reading, because I believe in having one book to lead another. But, after the beginning, these courses for different persons will vary very much from each other.

First is the Bible, of which not only is an intelligent knowledge necessary for your healthy growth in religious life, but—which is of less consequence, indeed—it is as necessary for your tolerable understanding of the literature, or even science, of a world which for eighteen centuries has been under the steady influence of the Bible.

Around the English version of it the English language of the last three centuries has revolved, as the earth revolves around the sun. Although the language of one time differs from that of another, it is always at about the same distance from the language of King James's Bible.

Second, every one ought to be quite well informed as to the history of the country in which he lives. All of you should know the general history of the United States well. You should know the history of your own

State in more detail, and of your own town in the most detail of all.

Third, an American needs to have a clear knowledge of the general features of the history of England.

Now it does not make so much difference how you compass this general historical knowledge, if in its main features you do compass it. When Mr. Lincoln went down to Norfolk to see the rebel commissioners, Mr. Hunter, on their side, cited as a precedent for the action which he wanted the President to pursue, the negotiations between Charles the First and his Parliament. Mr. Lincoln's eyes twinkled, and he said, "Upon questions of history I must refer you to Mr. Seward, for he is posted upon such things, and I do not profess to be. My only distinct recollection of the matter is that Charles lost his head." Now you see it is of no sort of consequence how Mr. Lincoln got his thoroughly sound knowledge of the history of England,—in which, by the way, he was entirely at home,—and he had a perfect right to pay the compliment he did to Mr. Seward; but it was of great importance to him that he should not be haunted with the fear that the other man did know of some important piece of negotiation of which he was ignorant. It was important to him to know that, so that he might be sure that his joke was—as it was—exactly fitting the answer.

Fourth, it is necessary that every intelligent American or Englishman should have read carefully most of Shakespeare's plays. Most people would have named them before the history, but I do not. I do not care, however, how early you read them in life, and, as we shall see, they will be among your best guides for the history of England.

Lastly, it is a disgrace to read even the newspapers without knowing where the places are which are spoken of. You need, therefore, the very best atlas you can provide yourself with. The atlas you had when you studied geography at school is better than none. But, if you can compass any more precise and full, so much the better.

When people talk of the "books which no gentleman's library should be without," the list may be boiled down, I think,—if in any stress we should be reduced to the bread-and-water diet,—to such books as will cover these five fundamental necessities.—From "*How to Do It*," by E. E. Hale.

Leisure will always be found by persons who know how to employ their time; those who want time are the people who do nothing.—*Mme. Roland.*

NATURAL HISTORY.

A HUMBLE FRIEND.

To the credit of the toad we must place the destruction of a remarkably large number of particularly injurious insects, such as cut-worms, army worms, caterpillars, gypsy moths, brown-tail moths, May beetles, rose chafers, wireworms, cucumber and potato beetles, also snails, thousand-legged worms, and sow bugs. The quantity of injurious species destroyed forms 62 per cent. of its total food. Should ants be included as injurious, as many housekeepers would think proper, this figure would be increased to 81 per cent. These figures, derived from careful examinations, show the toad to be a highly beneficial animal, and well entitled to man's protection in every possible way.

The amount of food consumed by the toad is remarkable. Records have been given of finding 77 thousand-legged worms in one stomach, 37 tent caterpillars in another, 65 gypsy-moth caterpillars in a third, and 55 army worms in a fourth. Under the writer's direction 24 medium-sized gypsy-moth caterpillars were fed to a toad under observation before its appetite was appeased, while Mr. F. H. Mosher fed over thirty full-grown celery caterpillars to another in less than three hours. Dr. Hodge has seen a toad "snap up 86 house flies in less than ten minutes," while he has also published an interesting observation by Ellen M. Foskett, Worcester, Mass., who fed 90 rose-bugs to a toad without satisfying its appetite.

The number of insects a toad consumes in a season is conjectural. The writer is satisfied that the amount of food taken in twenty-four hours amounts to about four times the stomach capacity. In cold weather this figure would be lower, while in midsummer, when insect life is at its height, the quantity would probably be larger.

In ninety days (a period selected because May, June, and July represent the time of the toad's greatest activity) it would destroy 360 beneficial insects (ground beetles) and 9,720 injurious or noxious insects. Take the single item of cut-worms. These insects are preyed upon by ground beetles. Let us assume that the ground beetles, if spared, would have succeeded in capturing 10 per cent. of the cut-worms. This would leave a net balance of 1,944 cut-worms to the toad's credit. Many gardeners give their children one cent apiece for each cut-worm found and destroyed, considering this a low estimate of the damage caused by the insects. Even at this nominal figure, without con-

sidering the importance of the destruction of other injurious insects, the toad's services on this one item would figure \$19.44.

The toad suffers from enemies both natural and unnatural. Of those provided by nature a few internal parasites are sometimes found, while hawks, owls, crows, snakes, and skunks yearly destroy large numbers. The marsh hawk kills a great many toads during the spawning season, while hens, ducks, geese, and guinea fowls feed on the young toads as they migrate from the breeding pools.

It is, perhaps, the irony of fate that large numbers of the toad should be killed annually by man, the one most benefited by its life. Lawn-mowers work great slaughter among them, while the practice of burning over lawns and fields kills more. The killing of toads in this way is largely unnecessary, and the extra labor involved in protecting their lives will be more than repaid by their services.

The heaviest charge of wrong-doing must be entered against the small boy, ubiquitous, inquisitive, and often thoughtlessly cruel. In a case coming under the writer's notice two boys in one afternoon established the disreputable record of seventeen dead and mutilated toads captured at a breeding pool. Such a wanton and expensive exhibition of cruelty may be unique, but it is certain that thousands of toads are killed in this way annually, and this practice will continue until our boys are taught to recognize the value of the toad and to respect its rights. Laws protect our insectivorous birds, as well as others whose worth to man is, to say the least, a debatable question. The toad's worth is an established fact. Should it not receive a similar protection?

It is said that English gardeners often pay as high as \$25 a hundred for toads for colonizing purposes. That such a procedure is sometimes successful is shown by the experience of the well-known authoress, Celia Thaxter, who at one time found her beautiful gardens at the Isles of Shoals overrun by insects and snails. A considerable number of toads were imported from the mainland, with the result that in a short time the pests were suppressed and the flowers preserved from harm.

A better plan is to provide a breeding place for toads and carry them to it at the mating time, so that later in the season the young toads, leaving the water, may establish themselves in the locality. A shallow pool, having a small but constant water supply, is all that is needed. Stagnant rather than running water is desirable, since the growths in which the tadpoles feed do not

develop so well where there is a current. Further, the stagnant pools usually have a higher temperature, thus favoring the growth of the tadpoles. Against this plan may be urged the breeding of mosquitoes in such pools, and under such circumstances this objection may prove an important one. It is entirely possible, however, that the tadpoles would keep down the mosquito larvæ, and in any case the young toads will leave the water by midsummer or before the mosquitoes become abundant, when the pools may be drained.

It is always well to provide artificial shelters for toads in gardens. These are easily made by digging shallow holes and partially covering them with a board or flat stone. Toads will use these shelters for weeks, sallying forth by night and returning at day-break. Greenhouse owners will find toads particularly useful as destroyers of snails, sow bugs, weevils, and other injurious forms of animal life. The well-known entomologist, Dr. Ritzema Bos, writes, "In the research gardens of the Rouen entomological laboratory the snails were entirely exterminated in 1891 as a result of introducing one hundred toads and ninety frogs." At Malden, Mass., a collection of valuable orchids were severely injured through the attacks of myriapods and sow bugs. On the writer's advice a number of toads were introduced, and all damage from this cause soon ceased. Many other cases where the toad may be made useful will suggest themselves. The common greenhouse rose weevil (Fuller's beetle) can doubtless be controlled in greenhouses by the aid of toads, particularly if the beetles be jarred from the bushes at occasional intervals.—*From the United States Farmer's Bulletin.*

BIOGRAPHY.

THE CHARACTER AND WRITINGS OF JOHN MILTON.

The splendor of Milton's poetic fame has tended to obscure or conceal the extent of his mind and the variety of its energies and attainments. To many he seems only a poet, when in truth he was a profound scholar, a man of vast compass of thought, imbued thoroughly with all ancient and modern learning, and able to master, to mould, to impregnate with his own intellectual power, his great and various acquisitions. He was conscious of that within him which could quicken all knowledge, and wield it with ease and might; which could give freshness to old truths and harmony to discordant thoughts;

which could bind together, by living ties and mysterious affinities, the most remote discoveries, and rear fabrics of glory and beauty from the rude materials which other minds had collected. Milton had that universality which marks the highest order of intellect. His healthy mind delighted in genius, on whatever soil, or in whatever age, it burst forth and poured out its fulness. He understood too well the rights and dignity and pride of creative imagination to lay on it the laws of the Greek or Roman school. Parnassus was not to him the only holy ground of genius. Great minds were everywhere his kindred. He felt the enchantment of Oriental fiction, surrendered himself to the strange creations of "Araby the Blest," and delighted still more in the romantic spirit of chivalry and in the tales of wonder in which it was embodied. Accordingly his poetry reminds us of the ocean, which adds to its own boundlessness contributions from all regions under heaven. Nor was it only in the department of imagination that his acquisitions were vast. He travelled over the whole field of knowledge, as far as it had then been explored. His various philological attainments were used to put him in possession of the wisdom stored in all countries, where the intellect had been cultivated. The natural philosophy, metaphysics, ethics, history, theology, and political science, of his own and former times, were familiar to him. Never was there a more unconfined mind; and we would cite Milton as a practical example of the benefits of that universal culture of intellect, which forms one distinction of our times, but which some dread as unfriendly to original thought. Let such remember that mind is in its own nature diffusive. Its object is the universe, which is strictly one, or bound together by infinite connections and correspondences; and accordingly its natural progress is from one to another field of thought; and wherever original power, creative genius exists, the mind, far from being distracted or oppressed by the variety of its acquisitions, will see more and more common bearings and hidden and beautiful analogies in all the objects of knowledge, will see mutual light shed from truth to truth, and will compel, as with a kingly power, whatever it understands, to yield some tribute of proof, or illustration, or splendor, to whatever topic it would unfold.

Milton's fame rests chiefly on his poetry, but his prose writings are marked with the same vigorous mind which gave us "Paradise Lost." The attention to these works has been discouraged by some objections, on which we shall bestow a few remarks.

And first, it is objected to his prose writings, that the style is difficult and obscure, abounding in involutions, transpositions, and Latinisms; that his protracted sentences exhaust and weary the mind, and too often yield it no better recompense than confused and indistinct perceptions. We mean not to deny that these charges have some ground but they seem to us much exaggerated; and, when we consider that the difficulties of Milton's style have almost sealed up his prose writings, we cannot but lament the fastidiousness and effeminacy of modern readers. We know that simplicity and perspicuity are important qualities of style; but there are vastly nobler and more important ones, such as energy and richness, and in these Milton is not surpassed. The best style is not that which puts the reader most easily and in the shortest time in possession of a writer's naked thoughts, but that which is the truest image of a great intellect, which conveys fully and carries farthest into other souls the conceptions and feelings of a profound and lofty spirit. To be universally intelligible is not the highest merit. A great mind cannot, without injurious constraint, shrink itself to the grasp of common passive readers. Its natural movement is free, bold, and majestic, and it ought not to be required to part with these attributes, that the multitude may keep pace with it. A full mind will naturally overflow in long sentences, and, in the moment of inspiration, when thick-coming thoughts and images crowd upon it, will often pour them forth in a splendid confusion, dazzling to common readers, but kindling to congenial spirits. There are writings which are clear through their shallowness. We must not expect in the ocean the transparency of the calm inland stream. For ourselves, we love what is called easy reading perhaps too well, especially in our hours of relaxation; but we love, too, to have our faculties tasked by master spirits. We delight in long sentences, in which a great truth, instead of being broken up into numerous periods, is spread out in its full proportions, is irradiated with variety of illustration and imagery, is set forth in a splendid affluence of language, and flows, like a full stream, with a majestic harmony which fills at once the ear and the soul. Such sentences are worthy and noble manifestations of a great and far-looking mind, which grasps at once vast fields of thought, just as the natural eye takes in at a moment wide prospects of grandeur and beauty. We would not indeed have all compositions of this character. Let abundant provision be made for the common intellect. Let

such writers as Addison, an honored name, "bring down philosophy from heaven to earth." But let inspired genius fulfil its higher function of lifting the prepared mind from earth to heaven. Impose upon it no strict laws, for it is its own best law. Let it speak in its own language, in tones which suit its own ear. Let it not lay aside its natural port, or dwarf itself that it may be comprehended by the surrounding multitude. If not understood and relished now, let it place a generous confidence in other ages, and utter oracles which futurity will expound. We are led to these remarks, not merely for Milton's justification, but because our times seem to demand them. Literature, we fear, is becoming too popular. The whole community is now turned into readers, and in this we heartily rejoice; and we rejoice too that so much talent is employed in making knowledge accessible to all. We hail the general diffusion of intelligence as the brightest feature of the present age. But good and evil are never disjoined; and one bad consequence of the multitude of readers is that men of genius are too anxious to please the multitude, and prefer a present shout of popularity to that less tumultuous, but deeper, more thrilling note of the trump of Fame, which resounds and grows clearer and louder through all future ages.—*William Ellery Channing.*

God gives us tongues on purpose that they should be used. As he made birds to sing and stars to shine and rivers to flow, so has he made men and women to converse with one another to his glory. It may be desirable that some should speak less, but it is still more that some should speak better.—*Spurgeon.*

We cannot kindle when we will

The fire which in the heart resides:

The spirit bloweth, and is still;

In mystery our soul abides.

But tasks in hours of insight willed

Can be through hours of gloom fulfilled.

—*Mr. Arnold.*

The religion of some people is constrained. They are like people who use the cold bath, not for pleasure, but necessity and their health: they go in with reluctance, and are glad when they get out. But religion to a true believer is like water to a fish: it is his element; he lives in it, and he could not live out of it.—*Newton.*

There is always a presumption that a pure-hearted will be a right-minded man; and it is delightful to see such a one stand up before

the ambitious sophist, and dart on his ingenuities a clear ray of conscience that scatters them like mist. The divine light of a good mind is too much for the mystifications of guilt.—*Martineau.*

There are people who would do great acts; but, because they wait for great opportunities, life passes, and the acts of love are not done at all.—*F. W. Robertson.*

Books are a guide in youth and an entertainment in age.—*Robert Collyer.*

Christianity is not only deeper, higher, broader, better than any other religion, but essentially different from every other in this: that its truth is so absolute and universal as to be fitted to become the religion of mankind.

The highest truths may be close to us, but we must open our eyes to see them. Those who listened to Jesus himself did not always understand his sayings. Ignorance, prejudice, preconceived opinions, prevented them, and will prevent us, from seeing what is on the very face of the gospel.

How be at once brave in facing evil and gentle in our treatment of the sinner? It is only by entering more and more into the mind of Christ. It is by having faith in the power and nearness of his spirit. It is by living, as he did, in the presence of the Father.

A VALUABLE DOG.

When Stephen Yardley returned from Europe he brought a dog with him. The animal was evidently not of a breed that would enable him to take a prize in a dog show, and since Yardley was rich and always had the best that money could buy, there was some curiosity among his friends to know why the beast had taken his fancy. This was enhanced by noticing that Yardley led the dog down the gangway himself and on leaving the dock took him with him into the carriage.

"What did you pay for him?" asked a friend.

"Five thousand dollars."

"Five thousand dollars?"

"Yes, and ten thousand wouldn't buy him."

"There must be something about him that is not discernible to the eye. What is it?"

"I'll tell you. I was in Paris when the great European war broke out. Indeed, for

the past few years I've been more in Paris than at home. Well, you know we Americans in Paris organized an American corps to join in the dispute between the allies and Germans. I enlisted—why I don't exactly know. The United States remained neutral, and I suppose we should have remained neutral, but we didn't. We went into it the way most men volunteer in wartime—to be in the excitement.

"Anyway, we formed a corps and after a certain amount of training were marched to the front. You remember that there was a lot of fighting in a wood near the centre of the line. I was fighting one day in the wood when we suddenly came upon a lot of Germans, and a lively scrimmage followed. Our fellows were driven back, and I, shot in the body, was left on the field. The Germans didn't know that they had licked us, or, fearing an ambush or something, retreated.

"Well, there I was, deserted by friend and foe, left to bleed to death in a wood. Night came on, and the horror and loneliness were enough to kill a man without his dying of a wound. Fortunately the cold weather had not yet come on, and I didn't suffer with the cold. It was a relief to see the day coming, for it brought a hope that there would be more fighting in the wood and I would be within the lines of either one side or the other.

"But the firing that began with dawn seemed to recede rather than approach. I had nothing to sustain me either of food or drink. I crawled toward the nearest dead body—a German—and tried to find some sustenance on him, but there was neither a crust of bread nor a swallow of water. I crawled on a little farther to a dead Frenchman and found some bread and a flask of wine.

"If it hadn't been for these I would have perished, for I lay there all that day and another night. I had stuffed a part of my shirt into my wound, and it choked up the bleeding, but I didn't dare draw a long breath for fear of starting the hemorrhage again. While I was intent on myself and my dreadful condition incidents about me were ever present. The birds that had been frightened away by the firing returned and were flitting in the branches above me. Insects were buzzing, attending to their daily affairs, unmindful that a human being was gradually sinking to death.

"Finally I fell into a stupor. I didn't know whether it was night or day and I didn't care. I heard a distant booming, but that was going on all the while. I heard the bark of a dog and had I been in a better

condition might have especially noticed it. The bark sounding nearer, I made an effort to arouse myself. When it was close by me I opened my eyes and there was the dog looking at me and barking.

"Pretty soon he scampered off, barking as he ran; then I could hear him drawing nearer again. But I was too weak to take much notice of him. He was gone so long that I forgot all about him. But after a while I heard his bark again far away, but drawing nearer. The next thing I knew I felt a hand on my wrist. Opening my eyes, there was a man with a red cross on his arm kneeling beside me.

"As soon as he knew that I lived he gave a call, and assistance came. I was put on a stretcher and carried to the rear, where I was placed in a hospital and received proper attention.

"As soon as I got well enough to think of anything except myself I asked about the dog that had saved me. I was told that he was one of the dogs that had been trained to hunt for the wounded. He had gone off into the wood where I lay and had come back barking and indicating that he wished to be followed. A man was sent with him and found me very near death's door. Probably another hour without attention would have finished me.

"I asked to see the dog, and he was brought in to me. When I offered to buy him I was told that the Red Cross dogs were not for sale. Then I agreed to subscribe \$1,000 to the Red Cross fund in exchange for him. My offer did not produce any effect till I raised it to \$5,000. Then by some hocus pocus the Red Cross managers got around the selling of one of their dogs for money, and my offer was accepted.

"And now you know why I have brought home a dog that originally was bought for perhaps \$5 or \$10, having paid \$5,000 for him."

And Yardley hugged his pet.—*Our Four-footed Friends.*

HYDROPHOBIA.

Ninety-nine persons out of a hundred, when they have been bitten by a dog, entertain the liveliest anticipation that they are bound to die from hydrophobia. Probably not one dog bite in twenty thousand is liable to cause hydrophobia. Only three or four deaths in a million, in the human race, are credited to this dread disease, and probably three out of the four are due to fright rather than to genuine hydrophobia. We are

moved to this reflection by a newspaper clipping describing the death of a man in Syracuse. He did not have hydrophobia. The dog which bit him was shown not to have rabies, but practical jokes played upon him caused a condition of autohypnosis which resulted in his death.

The editor of this magazine has been actively practising medicine for nearly forty years. For nearly twenty years, as president of a large local humane society, he has had charge of public dog kennels which have received many thousands of dogs. In spite of a constant lookout for hydrophobia and rabies, he has never seen a case. Dr. Charles W. Dulles, formerly lecturer on the History of Medicine in the University of Pennsylvania, about a year ago delivered an interesting lecture on hydrophobia, in which he calls attention to the extreme rarity of this disease and the many abuses which have grown out of unnecessary alarms over its possible existence.

The point of this discussion lies in the fact that the public has been systematically terrorized by rabies literature let loose by departments of agriculture, and by sensational newspaper alarms. These have resulted in many imaginary cases of hydrophobia and an immense amount of wholly unnecessary suffering. Why not try to exercise a little common sense in regard to this enormously exaggerated danger? —*Dr. W. O. Stillman, in the National Humane Review.*

The "mad dog scare" which has resulted in muzzling dogs, thereby rendering them much more liable to any and every disease a dog is subject to, particularly fits, has thrown many poor dogs out of homes. Some people, we fear, deliberately lose them, and others, who are more humane, bring them to us to place in homes in towns where the authorities have better sense than to muzzle the dogs. A very large and very old St. Bernard, shaved from his tail to his shoulders, was found on the streets, confused, foot-weary, and hungry. He was kindly ministered to and made as comfortable as possible, but he moaned for some one he had loved, and we were thankful when the time was up that we allot to each dog to give a chance for the owner to advertise him.

Public opinion is a weak tyrant compared with our own private opinion: what a man thinks of himself, that it is which determines, or, rather, indicates his fate.—*Thoreau.*

cents a ton. Sad scales told no tales; Eli,
clad in seals, stood cold as solid tea.

—*The Wellspring.*

III.

I

DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

[illegible]

1. A State of the American Union.
2. A library of Oxford University, England.
3. A State of the American Union.
4. A Roman statesman.
5. The name of the first steamboat on the Hudson River.
6. A place in Upper Egypt famous for its two rock temples built by Rameses II.
7. A locality in England where in 1016 Edmund Ironsides was defeated by Canute.
8. A Roman politician.
9. A town in Massachusetts.
10. An English divine.
11. An Arctic explorer.
12. The southwestern county of England.
13. Another State of the American Union.

II.

WORD MAKING.

(The words in the following sentences are formed out of one word. What word is it?)

Daniel Easton sold clean salt in a load to Eli Solon, an old lad in Lead, N.D., at ten

CHANGED INITIALS.

Example: Change to move off to a con-
noisseur. *Answer:* Budge—judge.

1. Change a male red deer to a portion of anything.
2. Change anger to the native form of a metal.
3. Change a mound to a little width.
4. Change to pierce with the teeth to a paper toy.
5. Change peculiar to increase.
6. Change the female of any bird to a small enclosure.
7. Change the organ of hearing to an implement to impel a boat.
8. Change to perforate by turning an auger to a synonym for blood.

When the changes have been rightly made, and the words written one below another, the initial letters will spell the Indian name of a village in Massachusetts.

IV.

A DIAMOND.

1. A consonant.
2. The highest point.
3. Pieces of gold, silver, copper, coined and issued as a medium of exchange.
4. An article in common use.
5. A consonant.

Answers to puzzles in the September number.

I. CITIES OF EUROPE.—1. Hamburg. 2. Budapest. 3. Kiel. 4. Belgrade. 5. Oxford. 6. Moscow. 7. Madrid. 8. Lisbon. 9. Berne. 10. Cork. 11. Frankfort. 12. Warsaw.

II. THE ANT TO THE CRICKET.—Petulant, ignorant, brilliant, rant or scant, dormant, verdant, can't (?), grant, want, attendant, adamant, hydrant.

III. HALF SQUARE.—S P A I N
P A I N
A I R
I N
N

IV. INITIAL LETTER PUZZLE.—Labor Day.

V. PECULIAR ARITHMETIC.—Midsummer day.

Answers to puzzles in the July-August number.

V. CONUNDRUM.—August.

THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE.

OBJECTS.

1. To cheer and comfort the lonely and discouraged—not only invalids, but all who need cheer and comfort—by the interchange of letters and by gifts of books and periodicals.

2. To supply in some measure to young people in remote places the lack of schools, by gifts of school-books, letters, and, for those who desire it, correspondence classes on history, the natural sciences, and other interesting branches of study. If any desire to join such classes, they may send their names to our secretary.

3. Also to supply, to some extent, the lack of a church. One good sermon or sermon extract is printed in each number of the paper. These sermons are never doctrinal, but practical, and intended to cheer and comfort the sorrowful and aid in giving a vital religion without regard to sect or creed.

Any minister (of any sect) who receives this paper is cordially invited to distribute the copies of the *Cheerful Letter* received among lonely members of his parish, shut-ins, or invalids of whom he may know. He is also invited to write to our headquarters (see address on this page) and give names and addresses of those who may be cheered and helped by becoming our correspondents.

No *theology* is disseminated in our paper. All the religious matter is intended merely to strengthen, cheer, and comfort those in need of such practical help.

Givers of books are reminded that only books of instructive or wholesome nature should be offered in the Book Club. Classics, educational works, and standard novels are always acceptable.

The present address of Mrs. Emma M. Backus is College Park, Georgia.

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Apply to Mrs. Walter G. Leith, 6 Ashton Place, Cambridge, Mass.

IMPORTANT NOTICES.

The regular monthly meeting of The *Cheerful Letter* Exchange will be held on Friday, November 5, at 10.30 A.M., at 25 Beacon Street, Boston. All interested are cordially invited to be present.

The work has grown so it is no longer easy for the Book Club Secretary to care for all that pertains to the Club. The following ladies have volunteered to take charge of the different interests: For Bibles, either for requests or offers, apply to Mrs. Laura Hallett, Myrtle Terrace, Winchester, Mass. For scraps for patchwork, for requests or offers, to Mrs. E. H. Brigham, 72 Walnut Street, Brookline, Mass. For music, for requests or offers, to Mrs. Thomas Lacey, 145 Grand View Avenue, Wollaston, Mass.

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It is a rule of the *Cheerful Letter* Exchange that no one may ask for money, clothing, or other articles, except books and magazines.

The name of any person who fails to obey this rule will be dropped from our list. Any worker receiving such a request should send the letter at once to headquarters.

The Chairman, Mrs. George G. Saville, is at the rooms, 25 Beacon Street, on Thursday afternoons, from 2 until 4.30 P.M.

In sending subscriptions for the *Cheerful Letter*, address The *Cheerful Letter* Exchange, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass. Subscriptions, 50 cents a year.

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